



IN THE
SHADOW

of

EDGAR
ALLAN
POE

Classic Tales of Terror

1816-1914

+

edited by

LESLIE S. KLINGER

+

AMBROSE BIERCE, JOSEPH SHERIDAN LE FANU
THEODOR GAUTIER, CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN,
ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, LAFCADIO HEARN, M. R. JAMES,
BRAM STOKER, *and many others*

IN THE
SHADOW
of
EDGAR
ALLAN
POE

Classic Tales of Horror,
1816–1914



edited by
LESLIE S. KLINGER



PEGASUS CRIME
NEW YORK LONDON

To Edgar Allan Poe:

*“Those who dream by day are cognizant of many things
that escape those who dream only at night.”*



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

by Leslie S. Klinger

THE SAND-MAN (1816)

by E. T. A. Hoffmann

THE MUMMY'S FOOT (1840)

by Théophile Gautier

*AN ACCOUNT OF SOME STRANGE
DISTURBANCES IN AUNGIER STREET* (1853)

by Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu

THE UPPER BERTH (1886)

by F. Marion Crawford

HIS UNCONQUERABLE ENEMY (1889)

by W. C. Morrow

IN DARK NEW ENGLAND DAYS (1890)

by Sarah Orne Jewett

THE YELLOW WALLPAPER (1891)

by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

DESIREE'S BABY (1893)

by Kate Chopin

THE YELLOW SIGN (1895)

by Robert W. Chambers

A TRAGEDY OF BONES (1895)

by George MacDonald

A NIGHT OF HORROR (1899)

by Dick Donovan

THE CORPSE-RIDER (1900)

by Lafcadio Hearn

THE LEATHER FUNNEL (1902)

by Arthur Conan Doyle

THE SHADOWS ON THE WALL (1903)

by Mary Wilkins Freeman

LOST HEARTS (1904)

by M. R. James

THE MOONLIT ROAD (1907)

by Ambrose Bierce

THE SPIDER (1907)

by Hanns Heinz Ewers

THE WOMAN WITH THE HOOD (1908)

by L. T. Meade

THE EASTER EGG (1911)

by Saki (H. H. Munro)

THE SQUAW (1914)

by Bram Stoker

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABOUT THE EDITOR

INTRODUCTION

by Leslie S. Klinger



Edgar Allan Poe did not invent the tale of terror. Homer's *Odyssey* records Odysseus's confrontations with several witches, including Circe. The Bible (Samuel 28: 3–25) reports Saul's consultation with the Witch of Endor, a medium who calls up a spirit whom Saul identifies as the prophet Samuel. The writings of the Greeks contain several accounts of ancient vampires, called *lamia* or *empusæ*. Phlegon of Tralles, writing in the 2nd century, recounts a story about Philinium, a woman who returns from the grave to sleep with a young man, Machates.¹ The *empusæ* also appear in Aristophanes's *The Frogs* (ca. 450 B.C.E.). Flavius Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, ca. 200 C.E., tells of a near-fatal relationship between Menippus and a "Phoenician woman" who confesses to being a vampire.² The Roman *raconteur* Lucius Apuleius, in *The Golden Ass* (translated into English in 1566), reports numerous meetings with witches and sorcerers, as well as a vampiric creature. Chaucer and Shakespeare both knew the traditions well, and their writings include numerous tales of ghosts and witches. The Renaissance polymath Niccolò Machiavelli wrote a novel-length story about an archdemon called "Belphagor" (or "Belfagor"). In the late 17th century and early 18th century, popular English writer Daniel Defoe penned a number of stories that are today classed as horror tales.

However, the true "flowering" of stories of horror (picture the emergence of creeping, pustulant vines rather than flowers) began in the late 18th century. Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1764) invented out of whole cloth the genre that became known as the Gothic horror or Gothic romance. Walpole sought to combine medieval ideas about the supernatural with the realism of the modern novel. Above all, he sought to create an atmosphere of terror, a world in which anything could happen and often did: A giant helmet falls from the heavens, crushing Conrad on his wedding day; immense limbs appear within the castle itself; mysterious blood flows; and a hodgepodge of other bogeymen wander in and out of the tale.

The immense success of Walpole's novel (which he wrote under a pseudonym and passed off as drawn from historical records) led to others exploring the genre. In 1777, Clara Reeve published an anonymous work originally titled *The Champion of Virtue*.³ The author shamelessly termed it the "literary offspring" of *Otranto*, and the public embraced it with the same fervour as Walpole's melodrama. Although it was similar in style to *Otranto*, Reeve attempted to inject more realism, avoiding some of the absurdities of Walpole.

Anne Radcliffe was perhaps the most successful exponent of combining the supernatural and the modern. Radcliffe's six novels, most notably *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) (parodied brilliantly by Jane Austen in *Northanger Abbey* [1817, although likely written 1798–99]) all focused on young heroines confronted with mysterious castles and even more mysterious nobles. Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), a sensational story of depravity, debauchery, and diabolism, was also extremely popular, and some critics see the physical description of Ambrosio, the titular monk, as the basis for Bram Stoker's Count Dracula. Sir Walter Scott's immense output included many horrific folk tales, including the portion of *Redgauntlet* known as "Wandering Willie's Tale" or "The Feast of Redgauntlet" (1824). Scott was also highly appreciative of the work of Radcliffe.

In America, Washington Irving wrote many tales of regional supernatural phenomena, among which "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and "Rip Van Winkle" (1820) are surely his best-remembered.

Although his psychological tales of New England made his fame, Nathaniel Hawthorne was also fascinated by strange stories, and among his numerous tales of the occult, “Dr. Heidegger’s Experiment” (1837) and the posthumously-published *Septimius Felton, or The Elixir of Life* (1871) are examples of Hawthorne’s continuing interest in the search for immortality.

The Gothic romantic phenomenon was not limited to English-speaking countries. The French *roman noir* (“black novels”)⁴ and the German *Schauerroman* (literally, “shudder-novels”)⁵ were equally popular. The bizarre tales of German writer E.T.A. Hoffmann and Polish nobleman Jan Potocki were also a part of the tradition. These continental cousins were generally more violent than their English counterparts.

The early stages of the Romantic movement, born in the early 19th century, produced twin icons of horror: the “scientific monster” and the vampire. Curiously, both emerged from a single night devoted to the telling of stories of horror. In 1816, Dr. John William Polidori accompanied his patient Lord Byron on a trip to Italy and Switzerland. That summer, they stayed at the Villa Diodati near Lake Geneva, where they were visited by poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, his soon-to-be-wife, Mary, and her stepsister, Jane “Claire” Claremont. When incessant rain kept the five friends indoors, they began reading aloud a book of ghost tales. According to Mary Shelley, Byron suggested that they each write a ghost story to rival those in the book. Her husband wrote nothing in response to the challenge; Byron started on a story but reportedly abandoned it.⁶

Mary Shelley’s effort became *Frankenstein*, published two years later. The tale of the scientist Victor Frankenstein and his misbegotten creature became extremely popular, resulting in a number of stage plays, a revised edition in 1831, and eventually countless films, parodies, comic books, radio dramas, and advertising images. Called by some the first science fiction novel, the popular images of the story have grown in stature to overshadow the original work. Seemingly every schoolchild knows the meaning of a staggering walk with outstretched arms; every filmgoer knows the indelible image of a horrific monster sharing a flower with an innocent child. While Shelley’s book was more a reverie on moral responsibility than a forecast of science-gone-wrong, generations read it as the ultimate horror tale, a stern warning about the arrogance of humankind.

An anonymous reviewer in 1818 hailed *Frankenstein* for its originality, excellence of language, and “peculiar interest,” and termed it “bold” and possibly “impious.” Later that year, Sir Walter Scott, writing for *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* (and ascribing the book to Percy Bysshe Shelley), commented that the work expressed its ideas clearly and forcibly. In his review, Scott contemplated the purpose of “marvellous romances,” as he classed the work: “A more philosophical and refined use of the supernatural in works of fiction, is proper to that class in which the laws of nature are represented as altered, not for the purpose of pampering the imagination with wonders, but in order to shew the probable effect which the supposed miracles would produce on those who witnessed them. In this case, the pleasure ordinarily derived from the marvellous incidents is secondary to that which we extract from observing how mortals like ourselves would be affected by scenes like these which, daring to depart from sober truth, are still to nature true. . . .” In other words, Scott believed that works like *Frankenstein* prepared us to face the horrific.

The other fruit of that famous summer evening (depicted idiosyncratically in Ken Russell’s 1986 film *Gothic*) was Polidori’s “The Vampyre,” the first popular account of vampirism published in England, in April 1819. Originally heralded as a work of Byron—and then seen as a satire of Byron—the story recounts some of the activities of the vampire Lord Ruthven, a nobleman marked by his aloof manner and the “deadly hue of his face, which never gained a warmer tint.” In the early part of the 19th century, the enigmatic yet strangely compelling Ruthven befriends a gentleman named Aubrey, who finds that even Ruthven’s death does not rid him of his deadly companion. When Ruthven returns from death, he rejoins Aubrey to the latter’s horror and soon attacks and kills Ianthe

the object of Aubrey's affections. Plunged into a breakdown, Aubrey recovers only to find that his beloved sister has also become the victim of the creature, who then vanishes.

Polidori was no great writer, as is evident from the concluding lines of the book: "Lord Ruthven had disappeared, and Aubrey's sister had glutted the thirst of a VAMPYRE!" Polidori's work is credited as the first of the great vampire tales, however, primarily for its depiction of a *gentleman* vampire—a far remove from the disgusting, blood-sucking corpses detailed in the accounts of vampires written by Calmet and other historians. It was immensely successful; within Polidori's lifetime (he died two years after publication), the work was translated into French, German, Spanish, and Swedish and adapted into several stage plays, which played to horror-struck audiences until the early 1850s.

Another memorable work of the early Romantics was *Melmoth the Wanderer*, published in 1820. Written by Charles Robert Maturin, the great-uncle of Oscar Wilde, its protagonist, John Melmoth, has sold his soul to gain 150 extra years of life. Melmoth wanders the earth searching for someone to take over this contract. Although the book is convoluted, with numerous tales-within-tales, Melmoth has been compared to Moliere's *Don Juan*, Goethe's *Faust*, and Byron's *Manfred* as a great allegorical figure, and H. P. Lovecraft called it "an enormous stride in the evolution of the horror-tale."⁷

Also extremely popular was *Varney the Vampyre*, written by James Malcolm Rymer⁸ and serialized in 109 weekly installments, from 1845 to 1847. The first novel-length account of a vampirism in English, the prose of *Varney* is sensational: "Her bosom heaves, and her limbs tremble, yet she cannot withdraw her eyes from that marble-looking face. . . . With a plunge he seizes her neck in his fang-like teeth—a gush of blood, and a hideous sucking noise follows. The girl has swooned, and the vampire is at his hideous repast!" Despite its artistic shortcomings, however, *Varney* delivers a vivid monstrous portrait of the undead. The vampire is Sir Francis Varney, born in the 17th century, frequently reborn from the dead—a "tall gaunt figure" whose face, similar to Ruthven's, is "perfectly white—perfectly bloodless," with eyes like "polished tin" and "fearful-looking teeth-projecting like those of some wild animal, hideously, glaringly white, and fang-like."

The tales of Edgar Allan Poe were mid-century milestones on the trail of the horror story. Beginning in 1835 with "Berenice," a dark tale of a man who becomes obsessed by his lover's teeth, Poe's stories covered the gamut of science fiction, mystery, and horror. It is impossible to overestimate their influence. In many of his works, Poe strove to create a "single effect" with a tale, focussing on an intense emotional experience. Poe was widely hailed in Europe, especially after Charles Baudelaire translated his work into French (between 1852 and 1865), achieving the dubious distinction of being the first American author to be better-regarded abroad than at home. For example, although "The Gold Bug" (1843) and "The Raven" (1845) made him a household name, he earned little from his writing, and at his death, he was popularly viewed as depraved, alcoholic, and drug-crazed.

Poe's best stories traverse the ranges of existentialism—pondering the inexorable nature of time and death and the indifference of God—and the depths of the human soul. They explore the demonic souls of ordinary people and extraordinary criminals and the pathology of crime and confession. Poe's work is read far more widely today than it was in the 19th century. Poe is the "grand master" of horror writing, and it is no surprise that iconic images of Poe and his raven form the logos of the Mystery Writers of America and the Horror Writers Association.

Poe's immediate legacy was the stories of Ambrose Bierce, Charles Dickens, and Wilkie Collins, all of whom wrote immensely popular tales of visitations by ghosts and other strange occurrences. For example, Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* (1843) is regarded today as verging on sentimental slush, but at its core, it remains a chilling story of a crisis of conscience brought about by powerful spirits. Collins's *Woman in White* (1860) combines the atmosphere of Gothic romance with the newly-

invented mystery tale, emphasizing rational deductions from clues. Bierce, many of whose short stories are still read today, crafted realistic accounts of war and horror which rang true to the American reading public, striving for Poe's "single effect."

Among the many fantastic writings of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu is his highly sensitive "Carmilla" (1872). The tale records the history of a female vampire. After a carriage accident, the charming and beautiful Carmilla is taken in by Laura, the narrator, a lonely young lady. Laura experiences terrifying dreams in which a mysterious woman visits her in bed and kisses her neck. She recalls that in the daytime the doting Carmilla occasionally "would press me more closely in her trembling embrace, and her lips in soft kisses gently glow upon my cheek. . . . In these mysterious moods I did not like her. I experienced a strange tumultuous excitement that was pleasurable, ever and anon, mingled with a vague sense of fear and disgust. . . . I was conscious of a love growing into adoration, and also of abhorrence."

Laura discovers that Carmilla is the double of Carmilla's ancestor, the Countess Mircalla Karnstein (of Styria), dead for more than a century. With the help of her father's friend General Spielsdorf, she travels to the village of Karnstein in Styria, where she learns from the General that Carmilla (who also calls herself Millarca) is the Countess Mircalla, a vampire. Laura and a band of men exhume Countess Mircalla's body and destroy her by driving a stake through her heart.

The late 19th century produced a number of writers fascinated by horror. Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, Guy de Maupassant, Henry James, and Robert Louis Stevenson all produced numerous stories in the genre, too many to consider here. The peak of 19th century horror literature, however, towers over its foothills. In 1897, Bram Stoker—a theatre critic, business manager, writer of romantic fiction and minor stories of fantasy and terror—delivered *Dracula*, a work so chilling that it set the standard for every subsequent story of creatures of the night.

When *Dracula* (which Stoker had originally titled *The Un-Dead*) appeared, some critics were immediately excited. The *Daily Mail* characterized the book as "powerful, and horrible. . . . The recollection of this weird and ghostly tale will doubtless haunt us for some time to come." "[H]orrid and creepy to the last degree," said *The Pall Mall Gazette*. "It is also excellent and one of the best things in the supernatural line that we have been lucky enough to hit upon." Less favourably, *The Bookman* expressed sentiments more in line with the majority of English reaction: "A summary of the book would shock and disgust; but we must own that, though here and there in the course of the tale we hurried over things with repulsion, we read nearly the whole thing with rapt attention."

Although vampires had been in the public eye for hundreds of years, it was *Dracula* who caught the imagination of the world and led "the triumphal march of the un-dead Transylvanian vampire," in the words of one critic, "through the newspapers, books, cinema screens and stages of the Anglo-Saxon world." Hundreds of stage plays, radio broadcasts, films, and television series (as well as thousands of vampire-themed stories and novels) followed in its wake. It was widely admired by 20th-century writers as well: H. P. Lovecraft, in his survey of "Supernatural Horror in Literature," wrote, "[B]est of all is the famous *Dracula*, which has become almost the standard modern exploitation of the frightful vampire myth. Count *Dracula*, a vampire, dwells in a horrible castle in the Carpathians, but finally migrates to England with the design of populating the country with fellow vampires. How an Englishman fares within *Dracula*'s stronghold of terrors, and how the dead fiend's plot for domination is at last defeated, are elements which unite to form a tale now justly assigned a permanent place in English letters."

Although Arthur Machen, Algernon Blackwood, and Lord Dunsany (all of whom lived to mid-century), and M. R. James were hailed by Lovecraft as the finest fantastic writers in the early years of the century, they are little-remembered today. Machen, a Welsh author whose supernatural works first appeared in the 1890s, was highly interested in the occult. He espoused a belief that behind the veil of

“reality” lay a realm of magic and ancient beings. In the 1920s, his writings attained popularity in America, with Vincent Starrett and James Branch Cabell among his strongest advocates. Machen’s work was an influence on the development of the pulp horror found in magazines like *Weird Tales* and on such notable fantasy writers as Clark Ashton Smith, Robert E. Howard, and H. P. Lovecraft.

The Englishman Algernon Blackwood was very much in the tradition of Poe and Bierce, with a prolific output of supernatural novels and short stories. Lovecraft described him as “inspired and prolific . . . amidst whose voluminous and uneven work may be found some of the finest spectral literature of this or any age.” His tales, Lovecraft noted, built up “detail by detail the complete sensations and perceptions leading from reality into supernormal life or vision. Without notable command of the poetic witchery of mere words, he is the one absolute and unquestioned master of weird atmosphere.” As a journalist, Blackwood wrote hundreds of articles, essays, and works of fiction, often under very short deadlines. His last collection of short stories appeared in 1946.

British peer Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett was the 18th Baron Dunsany. He was a prolific playwright, poet, novelist, and short-story writer. Although he wrote many supernatural stories, he is probably best remembered as a fantasist, a predecessor of J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis. His *Chronicles of Rodrigues* (1922) and *The King of Elfland’s Daughter* (1924) are highly acclaimed, and subsequent fantasy writers as diverse as Jorge Luis Borges and Neil Gaiman and science fiction writers Michael Moorcock, Arthur C. Clarke, Gene Wolfe, and Robert E. Howard have acknowledged the influence of Dunsany’s writings.

Montague Rhodes James was a medieval scholar whose ghost stories, many written as Christmas fireside tales for his friends, have been hailed as the finest in the genre, generally centered on malefic supernatural beings whose attentions are garnered by an unsuspecting victim opening an old book or discarded reliquary. After years of neglect, his stories are being rediscovered as long-lost gems of the occult.

In 1919, with the publication of a story entitled “Dagon,” a giant emerged in the genre. Howard Phillips Lovecraft began his career as a poet. In his influential “Supernatural Horror in Literature,” he described the field as “a narrow though essential branch of human expression, and will chiefly appeal as always to a limited audience with keen special sensibilities. Whatever universal masterpiece of tomorrow may be wrought from phantasm or terror will owe its acceptance rather to a supreme workmanship than to a sympathetic theme.” Lovecraft’s own workmanship produced an immense, steady stream of stories, novels, poetry, and essays, ending only with his untimely death in 1937 at the age of 47.

“Dagon” was the first of Lovecraft’s pieces to explore his self-created mythos of a pantheon of extra-dimensional deities which predate the birth of humankind. These “elder gods,” Lovecraft observed, were to be found in the interstices of ancient myths and legends. August Derleth, Lovecraft’s greatest disciple, termed these gods the “Cthulhu Mythos.” Lovecraft’s themes were indeed far from sympathetic: He was deeply cynical of mankind, especially in light of what he believed to be scientific evidence of the insignificance of humanity and the random, probabilistic nature of the universe. His writings expressed fatalism and a sense of inherited guilt for the sins of prior generations. He also posited extensive influence exerted by nonhuman intelligences on human affairs. The workings of the gods were best left unexplored by humans, he believed. In “The Call of Cthulhu” (1928), he counselled, “The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents . . . some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the light into the peace and safety of a new Dark Age.”

For most of the 20th century, the definitive editions of Lovecraft’s work (specifically *At the Mountains of Madness and Other Novels*, *Dagon and Other Macabre Tales*, *The Dunwich Horror and*

Others, and *The Horror in the Museum and Other Revisions*) were published by August Derleth's Arkham House, which Derleth founded for the express purpose of publishing the work of Lovecraft. Lovecraft intentionally used a sesquipedalian style of writing with antiquated spellings, to invoke a tone of seriousness and verisimilitude. His work was influenced heavily by Dunsany's ancient gods and Machen's tales of elder evils. In turn, his writings have been acknowledged as influences by a number of major science fiction, fantasy, and horror writers of the late 20th century and have been extensively parodied and copied in many media, including dozens of films.

It is impossible in this brief overview to do justice to horror writing after the first half of the century. The modern masters—Stephen King, Peter Straub, Clive Barker, Robert Bloch, Shirley Jackson, to name a few—are so well-known as to need no introduction, and any attempt to provide a history from this close proximity would be injudicious. We are fortunate to live in a time when the garden of the supernatural tale has grown so luxuriantly.

This collection is a selection of masterful tales of terror from authors who, by and large, are little remembered for their writing in this genre. Even Bram Stoker, whose *Dracula* may be said to be the most popular horror novel of all time, is not known as a writer of short fiction. While a few of the stories have been widely anthologized, most have been lost in the shadow of Edgar Allan Poe. Read on, now, perhaps with a flashlight at hand . . .

¹ *Fragmenta Historicorum Græcorum*, edited by Carl Müller and published in 1848, collected fragments of the works of Greek historians. The story is noted in Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) and Dom Augustin Calmet's *The Phantom World: The History and Philosophy of Spirits* (1746).

² This was probably also a lamia. The most famous translation of Philostratus's work is that of F. C. Conybeare, published as the Loeb Classical Library Edition in 1912.

³ The book was republished a year later under her own name as *The Old English Baron*.

⁴ Gaston Leroux's *Phantom of the Opera* (1910), with its tragically mad musician who commits horrible murders and kidnaps the love of his life is perhaps the culmination of this strain of books.

⁵ Friedrich Schiller's *The Ghost-Seer; or, The Apparitionist* (1789) is a prime example. Set in Venice, this "fragment" is a deliberate ambiguous tale of a masked Armenian and his accomplice, a medium, who lead a young, wealthy German count into a maze of visions and dark magic.

⁶ The completed but lost novel is brilliantly imagined in John Crowley's *Lord Byron's Novel: The Evening Land* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 2005).

⁷ "Supernatural Horror in Literature," *The Recluse* (1927), revised 1933–1935. Lovecraft crowed that in *Melmoth*, "Fear is taken out of the realm of the conventional and exalted into a hideous cloud over mankind's very destiny."

⁸ There remains some controversy over whether Rymer wrote *Varney* or whether it was the product of Thomas Peckett Prest (1810–1859?), author of numerous "penny dreadfuls" and creator of the demon barber Sweeney Todd. Prest claimed that *Varney* was based on true events occurring in the early 18th century, but he also claimed that Sweeney Todd was truthful.

THE SAND-MAN

E. T. A. Hoffmann



Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Hoffmann (1776–1822), who wrote as E. T. A. Hoffmann, was an immensely popular German author of fantasy and horror. His tales were highly influential, and his famous short novel, The Nutcracker and the Mouse King (1816), became the basis for Tschaikovsky’s ballet The Nutcracker (1892). Hoffmann and his stories feature in Offenbach’s opera The Tales of Hoffmann (1881); “The Sand-man” is one of the tales incorporated into that opera and has been adapted into other operatic works. The story first appeared in an 1817 book of stories titled Die Nachtstücke (The Night Pieces). The translation is by J. T. Beale from an 1885 edition published by Charles Scribner’s Sons.

NATHANAEL TO LOTHAIR

I know you are all very uneasy because I have not written for such a long, long time. Mother, to be sure, is angry, and Clara, I dare say, believes I am living here in riot and revelry, and quite forgetting my sweet angel, whose image is so deeply engraved upon my heart and mind. But that is not so; daily and hourly do I think of you all, and my lovely Clara’s form comes to gladden me in my dreams, and smiles upon me with her bright eyes, as graciously as she used to do in the days when I went in and out amongst you. Oh! how could I write to you in the distracted state of mind in which I have been, and which, until now, has quite bewildered me! A terrible thing has happened to me. Dark forebodings of some awful fate threatening me are spreading themselves out over my head like black clouds, impenetrable to every friendly ray of sunlight. I must now tell you what has taken place; I must, that I see well enough, but only to think upon it makes the wild laughter burst from my lips. Oh! my dear, dear Lothair, what shall I say to make you feel, if only in an inadequate way, that that which happened to me a few days ago could thus really exercise such a hostile and disturbing influence upon my life? Oh that you were here to see for yourself! but now you will, I suppose, take me for a superstitious ghost-seer. In a word, the terrible thing which I have experienced, the fatal effect of which I in vain exert every effort to shake off, is simply that some days ago, namely, on the 30th October, at twelve o’clock at noon, a dealer in weather-glasses¹ came into my room and wanted to sell me one of his wares. I bought nothing, and threatened to kick him downstairs, whereupon he went away of his own accord.

You will conclude that it can only be very peculiar relations—relations intimately intertwined with my life—that can give significance to this event, and that it must be the person of this unfortunate hawker which has had such a very inimical effect upon me. And so it really is. I will summon up all my faculties in order to narrate to you calmly and patiently as much of the early days of my youth as will suffice to put matters before you in such a way that your keen sharp intellect may grasp everything clearly and distinctly, in bright and living pictures. Just as I am beginning, I hear you laugh and Clara say, “What’s all this childish nonsense about!” Well, laugh at me, laugh heartily at me, pray do. But, good God! my hair is standing on end, and I seem to be entreating you to laugh at me in the same sort of frantic despair in which Franz Moor entreated Daniel to laugh him to scorn.² But to my story.

Except at dinner we, *i.e.*, I and my brothers and sisters, saw but little of our father all day long. His business no doubt took up most of his time. After our evening meal, which, in accordance with an old

custom, was served at seven o'clock, we all went, mother with us, into father's room, and took our places around a round table. My father smoked his pipe, drinking a large glass of beer to it. Often he told us many wonderful stories, and got so excited over them that his pipe always went out; I used then to light it for him with a spill³, and this formed my chief amusement. Often, again, he would give us picture-books to look at, whilst he sat silent and motionless in his easy-chair, puffing out such dense clouds of smoke that we were all as it were enveloped in mist. On such evenings mother was very sad; and directly it struck nine she said, "Come, children! off to bed! Come! The 'Sand-man' is come I see." And I always did seem to hear something trampling upstairs with slow heavy steps; that must be the Sand-man. Once in particular I was very much frightened at this dull trampling and knocking; as mother was leading us out of the room I asked her, "O mamma! but who is this nasty Sand-man who always sends us away from papa? What does he look like?" "There is no Sand-man, my dear child," mother answered; "when I say the Sand-man is come, I only mean that you are sleepy and can't keep your eyes open, as if somebody had put sand in them." This answer of mother's did not satisfy me; nay, in my childish mind the thought clearly unfolded itself that mother denied there was a Sand-man only to prevent us being afraid,—why, I always heard him come upstairs. Full of curiosity to learn something more about this Sand-man and what he had to do with us children, I at length asked the old woman who acted as my youngest sister's attendant, what sort of a man he was—the Sand-man? "Why, 'thanael, darling, don't you know?" she replied. "Oh! he's a wicked man, who comes to little children when they won't go to bed and throws handfuls of sand in their eyes, so that they jump out of their heads all bloody; and he puts them into a bag and takes them to the half-moon as food for his little ones; and they sit there in the nest and have hooked beaks like owls, and they pick naughty little boys' and girls' eyes out with them." After this I formed in my own mind a horrible picture of the cruel Sand-man. When anything came blundering upstairs at night I trembled with fear and dismay; and all that my mother could get out of me were the stammered words "The Sand-man! the Sand-man!" whilst the tears coursed down my cheeks. Then I ran into my bedroom, and the whole night through tormented myself with the terrible apparition of the Sand-man. I was quite old enough to perceive that the old woman's tale about the Sand-man and his little ones' nest in the half-moon couldn't be altogether true; nevertheless the Sand-man continued to be for me a fearful incubus, and was always seized with terror—my blood always ran cold, not only when I heard anybody come up the stairs, but when I heard anybody noisily open my father's room door and go in. Often he stayed away for a long season altogether; then he would come several times in close succession.

This went on for years, without my being able to accustom myself to this fearful apparition, without the image of the horrible Sand-man growing any fainter in my imagination. His intercourse with my father began to occupy my fancy ever more and more; I was restrained from asking my father about him by an unconquerable shyness; but as the years went on the desire waxed stronger and stronger within me to fathom the mystery myself and to see the fabulous Sand-man. He had been the means of disclosing to me the path of the wonderful and the adventurous, which so easily find lodgment in the mind of the child. I liked nothing better than to hear or read horrible stories of goblins, witches, Tom Thumbs, and so on; but always at the head of them all stood the Sand-man, whose picture I scribbled in the most extraordinary and repulsive forms with both chalk and coal everywhere, on the tables, and cupboard doors, and walls. When I was ten years old my mother removed me from the nursery into a little chamber off the corridor not far from my father's room. We still had to withdraw hastily whenever, on the stroke of nine, the mysterious unknown was heard in the house. As I lay in my little chamber I could hear him go into father's room, and soon afterwards I fancied there was a fine and peculiar smelling steam spreading itself through the house. As my curiosity waxed stronger, my resolve to make somehow or other the Sand-man's acquaintance took deeper root. Often when my mother had gone past, I slipped quickly out of my room into the corridor

but I could never see anything, for always before I could reach the place where I could get sight of him, the Sand-man was well inside the door. At last, unable to resist the impulse any longer, I determined to conceal myself in father's room and there wait for the Sand-man.

One evening I perceived from my father's silence and mother's sadness that the Sand-man would come; accordingly, pleading that I was excessively tired, I left the room before nine o'clock and concealed myself in a hiding-place close beside the door. The street door creaked, and slow, heavy, echoing steps crossed the passage towards the stairs. Mother hurried past me with my brothers and sisters. Softly—softly—I opened father's room door. He sat as usual, silent and motionless, with his back towards it; he did not hear me; and in a moment I was in and behind a curtain drawn before my father's open wardrobe, which stood just inside the room. Nearer and nearer and nearer came the echoing footsteps. There was a strange coughing and shuffling and mumbling outside. My heart beat with expectation and fear. A quick step now close, close beside the door, a noisy rattle of the handle, and the door flies open with a bang. Recovering my courage with an effort, I take a cautious peep out. In the middle of the room in front of my father stands the Sand-man, the bright light of the lamp falling full upon his face. The Sand-man, the terrible Sand-man, is the old advocate *Coppelius* who often comes to dine with us.

But the most hideous figure could not have awakened greater trepidation in my heart than this Coppelius did. Picture to yourself a large broad-shouldered man, with an immensely big head, a face the colour of yellow-ochre, grey bushy eyebrows, from beneath which two piercing, greenish, cat-like eyes glittered, and a prominent Roman nose hanging over his upper lip. His distorted mouth was often screwed up into a malicious smile; then two dark-red spots appeared on his cheeks, and a strange hissing noise proceeded from between his tightly clenched teeth. He always wore an ash-grey coat of an old-fashioned cut, a waistcoat of the same, and nether extremities to match, but black stockings and buckles set with stones on his shoes. His little wig scarcely extended beyond the crown of his head, his hair was curled round high up above his big red ears, and plastered to his temples with cosmetic, and a broad closed hair-bag stood out prominently from his neck, so that you could see the silver buckle that fastened his folded neck-cloth. Altogether he was a most disagreeable and horribly ugly figure; but what we children detested most of all was his big coarse hairy hands; we could never fancy anything that he had once touched. This he had noticed; and so, whenever our good mother quietly placed a piece of cake or sweet fruit on our plates, he delighted to touch it under some pretext or other, until the bright tears stood in our eyes, and from disgust and loathing we lost the enjoyment of the tit-bit that was intended to please us. And he did just the same thing when father gave us a glass of sweet wine on holidays. Then he would quickly pass his hand over it, or even sometimes raise the glass to his blue lips, and he laughed quite sardonically when all we dared do was to express our vexation in stifled sobs. He habitually called us the "little brutes;" and when he was present we might not utter a sound; and we cursed the ugly spiteful man who deliberately and intentionally spoilt all our little pleasures. Mother seemed to dislike this hateful Coppelius as much as we did for as soon as he appeared her cheerfulness and bright and natural manner were transformed into sad, gloomy seriousness. Father treated him as if he were a being of some higher race, whose ill-manners were to be tolerated, whilst no efforts ought to be spared to keep him in good-humour. He had only to give a slight hint, and his favourite dishes were cooked for him and rare wine uncorked.

As soon as I saw this Coppelius, therefore, the fearful and hideous thought arose in my mind that he, and he alone, must be the Sand-man; but I no longer conceived of the Sand-man as the bugbear in the old nurse's fable, who fetched children's eyes and took them to the half-moon as food for his little ones—no! but as an ugly spectre-like fiend bringing trouble and misery and ruin, both temporal and everlasting, everywhere wherever he appeared.

I was spell-bound on the spot. At the risk of being discovered, and, as I well enough knew, of being

severely punished, I remained as I was, with my head thrust through the curtains listening. My father received Coppelius in a ceremonious manner. "Come, to work!" cried the latter, in a hoarse snarling voice, throwing off his coat. Gloomily and silently my father took off his dressing-gown, and both put on long black smock-frocks. Where they took them from I forgot to notice. Father opened the folding doors of a cupboard in the wall; but I saw that what I had so long taken to be a cupboard was really a dark recess, in which was a little hearth. Coppelius approached it, and a blue flame crackled upwards from it. Round about were all kinds of strange utensils. Good God! as my old father bent down over the fire how different he looked! His gentle and venerable features seemed to be drawn up by some dreadful convulsive pain into an ugly, repulsive Satanic mask. He looked like Coppelius. Coppelius applied the red-hot tongs and drew bright glowing masses out of the thick smoke and began assiduously to hammer them. I fancied that there were men's faces visible round about, but without eyes, having ghastly deep black holes where the eyes should have been. "Eyes here! Eyes here!" cried Coppelius, in a hollow sepulchral voice. My blood ran cold with horror; I screamed and tumbled out of my hiding-place into the floor. Coppelius immediately seized upon me. "You little brute! You little brute!" he bleated, grinding his teeth. Then, snatching me up, he threw me on the hearth, so that the flames began to singe my hair. "Now we've got eyes—eyes—a beautiful pair of children's eyes," he whispered, and thrusting his hands into the flames he took out some red-hot grains and was about to strew them into my eyes. Then my father clasped his hands and entreated him, saying, "Master, master, let my Nathanael keep his eyes—oh! do let him keep them." Coppelius laughed shrilly and replied, "Well then, the boy may keep his eyes and whine and pule his way through the world; but we will now at once observe the mechanism of the hand and the foot." And therewith he roughly laid hold upon me, so that my joints cracked, and twisted my hands and my feet, pulling them now this way, and now that, "That's not quite right altogether! It's better as it was!—the old fellow knew what he was about." Thus lisped and hissed Coppelius; but all around me grew black and dark; a sudden convulsive pain shot through all my nerves and bones I knew nothing more.

I felt a soft warm breath fanning my cheek; I awakened as if out of the sleep of death; my mother was bending over me. "Is the Sand-man still there?" I stammered. "No, my dear child; he's been gone a long, long time; he'll not hurt you." Thus spoke my mother, as she kissed her recovered darling and pressed him to her heart. But why should I tire you, my dear Lothair? why do I dwell at such length on these details, when there's so much remains to be said? Enough—I was detected in my eavesdropping, and roughly handled by Coppelius. Fear and terror had brought on a violent fever, of which I lay ill several weeks. "Is the Sand-man still there?" these were the first words I uttered on coming to myself again, the first sign of my recovery, of my safety. Thus, you see, I have only to relate to you the most terrible moment of my youth for you to thoroughly understand that it must not be ascribed to the weakness of my eyesight if all that I see is colourless, but to the fact that a mysterious destiny has hung a dark veil of clouds about my life, which I shall perhaps only break through when I die.

Coppelius did not show himself again; it was reported he had left the town.

It was about a year later when, in pursuance of the old unchanged custom, we sat around the round table in the evening. Father was in very good spirits, and was telling us amusing tales about his youthful travels. As it was striking nine we all at once heard the street door creak on its hinges, and slow ponderous steps echoed across the passage and up the stairs. "That is Coppelius," said my mother, turning pale. "Yes, it is Coppelius," replied my father in a faint broken voice. The tears started from my mother's eyes. "But, father, father," she cried, "must it be so?" "This is the last time," he replied; "this is the last time he will come to me, I promise you. Go now, go and take the children. Go, go to bed—good-night."

As for me, I felt as if I were converted into cold, heavy stone; I could not get my breath. As I stood there immovable my mother seized me by the arm. "Come, Nathanael! do come along!" I suffered

myself to be led away; I went into my room. "Be a good boy and keep quiet," mother called after me, "get into bed and go to sleep." But, tortured by indescribable fear and uneasiness, I could not close my eyes. That hateful, hideous Coppelius stood before me with his glittering eyes, smiling maliciously down upon me; in vain did I strive to banish the image. Somewhere about midnight there was a terrific crack, as if a cannon were being fired off. The whole house shook; something went rustling and clattering past my door; the house door was pulled to with a bang. "That is Coppelius," I cried, terror-struck, and leapt out of bed. Then I heard a wild heartrending scream; I rushed into my father's room, the door stood open, and clouds of suffocating smoke came rolling towards me. The servant-maid shouted, "Oh! my master! my master!" On the floor in front of the smoking hearth lay my father, dead, his face burned black and fearfully distorted, my sisters weeping and moaning around him, and my mother lying near them in a swoon. "Coppelius, you atrocious fiend, you've killed my father," I shouted. My senses left me. Two days later, when my father was placed in his coffin; his features were mild and gentle again as they had been when he was alive. I found great consolation in the thought that his association with the diabolical Coppelius could not have ended in his everlasting ruin.

Our neighbours had been awakened by the explosion; the affair got talked about, and came before the magisterial authorities, who wished to cite Coppelius to clear himself. But he had disappeared from the place, leaving no traces behind him.

Now when I tell you, my dear friend, that the weather-glass hawker I spoke of was the villain Coppelius, you will not blame me for seeing impending mischief in his inauspicious reappearance. He was differently dressed; but Coppelius's figure and features are too deeply impressed upon my mind for me to be capable of making a mistake in the matter. Moreover, he has not even changed his name. He proclaims himself here, I learn, to be a Piedmontese mechanic⁴, and styles himself Giuseppe Coppola.

I am resolved to enter the lists against him and revenge my father's death, let the consequences be what they may.

Don't say a word to mother about the reappearance of this odious monster. Give my love to my darling Clara; I will write to her when I am in a somewhat calmer frame of mind. Adieu, &c.

CLARA TO NATHANAEL

You are right, you have not written to me for a very long time, but nevertheless I believe that I still retain a place in your mind and thoughts. It is a proof that you were thinking a good deal about me when you were sending off your last letter to brother Lothair, for instead of directing it to him you directed it to me. With joy I tore open the envelope, and did not perceive the mistake until I read the words, "Oh! my dear, dear Lothair." Now I know I ought not to have read any more of the letter, but ought to have given it to my brother. But as you have so often in innocent raillery made it a sort of reproach against me that I possessed such a calm, and, for a woman, cool-headed temperament that I should be like the woman we read of—if the house was threatening to tumble down, I should, before hastily fleeing, stop to smooth down a crumple in the window-curtains—I need hardly tell you that the beginning of your letter quite upset me. I could scarcely breathe; there was a bright mist before my eyes. Oh! my darling Nathanael! what could this terrible thing be that had happened? Separation from you—never to see you again, the thought was like a sharp knife in my heart. I read on and on. Your description of that horrid Coppelius made my flesh creep. I now learnt for the first time what a terrible and violent death your good old father died. Brother Lothair, to whom I handed over his property, sought to comfort me, but with little success. That horrid weather-glass hawker Giuseppe Coppola followed me everywhere; and I am almost ashamed to confess it, but he was able to disturb my sound and in general calm sleep with all sorts of wonderful dream-shapes. But soon—the next day—I saw

everything in a different light. Oh! do not be angry with me, my best-beloved, if, despite your strange presentiment that Coppelius will do you some mischief, Lothair tells you I am in quite as good spirit and just the same as ever.

I will frankly confess, it seems to me that all that was fearsome and terrible of which you speak, existed only in your own self, and that the real true outer world had but little to do with it. I can quite admit that old Coppelius may have been highly obnoxious to you children, but your real detestation of him arose from the fact that he hated children.

Naturally enough the gruesome Sand-man of the old nurse's story was associated in your childish mind with old Coppelius, who, even though you had not believed in the Sand-man, would have been to you a ghostly bugbear, especially dangerous to children. His mysterious labours along with your father at night-time were, I daresay, nothing more than secret experiments in alchemy, with which your mother could not be over well pleased, owing to the large sums of money that most likely were thrown away upon them; and besides, your father, his mind full of the deceptive striving after higher knowledge, may probably have become rather indifferent to his family, as so often happens in the case of such experimentalists. So also it is equally probable that your father brought about his death by his own imprudence, and that Coppelius is not to blame for it. I must tell you that yesterday I asked our experienced neighbour, the chemist, whether in experiments of this kind an explosion could take place which would have a momentarily fatal effect. He said, "Oh, certainly!" and described to me in his prolix and circumstantial way how it could be occasioned, mentioning at the same time so many strange and funny words that I could not remember them at all. Now I know you will be angry at you Clara, and will say, "Of the Mysterious which often clasps man in its invisible arms there's not a ray can find its way into this cold heart. She sees only the varied surface of the things of the world, and, like the little child, is pleased with the golden glittering fruit, at the kernel of which lies the fatal poison."

Oh! my beloved Nathanael, do you believe then that the intuitive prescience of a dark power working within us to our own ruin cannot exist also in minds which are cheerful, natural, free from care? But please forgive me that I, a simple girl, presume in my way to indicate to you what I really think of such an inward strife. After all, I should not find the proper words, and you would only laugh at me, not because my thoughts were stupid, but because I was so foolish as to attempt to tell them to you.

If there is a dark and hostile power which traitorously fixes a thread in our hearts in order that, laying hold of it and drawing us by means of it along a dangerous road to ruin, which otherwise we should not have trod—if, I say, there is such a power, it must assume within us a form like ourselves, nay, it must be ourselves; for only in that way can we believe in it, and only so understood do we yield to it so far that it is able to accomplish its secret purpose. So long as we have sufficient firmness, fortified by cheerfulness, to always acknowledge foreign hostile influences for what they really are, whilst we quietly pursue the path pointed out to us by both inclination and calling, then this mysterious power perishes in its futile struggles to attain the form which is to be the reflected image of ourselves. It is also certain, Lothair adds, that if we have once voluntarily given ourselves up to the dark physical power, it often reproduces within us the strange forms which the outer world throws in our way, so that thus it is we ourselves who engender within ourselves the spirit which by some remarkable delusion we imagine to speak in that outer form. It is the phantom of our own self whose intimate relationship with, and whose powerful influence upon our soul either plunges us into hell or elevates us to heaven. Thus you will see, my beloved Nathanael, that I and brother Lothair have well talked over the subject of dark powers and forces; and now, after I have with some difficulty written down the principal results of our discussion, they seem to me to contain many really profound thoughts. Lothair's last words, however, I don't quite understand altogether; I only dimly guess what

he means; and yet I cannot help thinking it is all very true. I beg you, dear, strive to forget the ugly advocate Coppelius as well as the weather-glass hawker Giuseppe Coppola. Try and convince yourself that these foreign influences can have no power over you, that it is only the belief in their hostile power which can in reality make them dangerous to you. If every line of your letter did not betray the violent excitement of your mind, and if I did not sympathise with your condition from the bottom of my heart, I could in truth jest about the advocate Sand-man and weather-glass hawker Coppelius. Pluck up your spirits! Be cheerful! I have resolved to appear to you as your guardian-angel if that ugly man Coppola should dare take it into his head to bother you in your dreams, and drive him away with a good hearty laugh. I'm not afraid of him and his nasty hands, not the least little bit; I won't let him either as advocate spoil any dainty tit-bit I've taken, or as Sand-man rob me of my eyes.

My darling, darling Nathanael,
Eternally your, &c. &c.

NATHANAEL TO LOTHAIR

I am very sorry that Clara opened and read my last letter to you; of course the mistake is to be attributed to my own absence of mind. She has written me a very deep philosophical letter, proving conclusively that Coppelius and Coppola only exist in my own mind and are phantoms of my own self which will at once be dissipated, as soon as I look upon them in that light. In very truth one can hardly believe that the mind which so often sparkles in those bright, beautifully smiling, childlike eyes of hers like a sweet lovely dream could draw such subtle and scholastic distinctions. She also mentions your name. You have been talking about me. I suppose you have been giving her lectures, since she sifts and refines everything so acutely. But enough of this! I must now tell you it is most certain that the weather-glass hawker Giuseppe Coppola is not the advocate Coppelius. I am attending the lecture of our recently appointed Professor of Physics, who, like the distinguished naturalist, is called Spalanzani⁵, and is of Italian origin. He has known Coppola for many years; and it is also easy to tell from his accent that he really is a Piedmontese. Coppelius was a German, though no honest German, fancy. Nevertheless I am not quite satisfied. You and Clara will perhaps take me for a gloomy dreamer, but nohow can I get rid of the impression which Coppelius's cursed face made upon me. I am glad to learn from Spalanzani that he has left the town. This Professor Spalanzani is a very queer fish. He is a little fat man, with prominent cheek-bones, thin nose, projecting lips, and small piercing eyes. You cannot get a better picture of him than by turning over one of the Berlin pocket-almanacs and looking at Cagliostro's⁶ portrait engraved by Chodowiecki⁷; Spalanzani looks just like him.

Once lately, as I went up the steps to his house, I perceived that beside the curtain which generally covered a glass door there was a small chink. What it was that excited my curiosity I cannot explain; but I looked through. In the room I saw a female, tall, very slender, but of perfect proportions, and splendidly dressed, sitting at a little table, on which she had placed both her arms, her hands being folded together. She sat opposite the door, so that I could easily see her angelically beautiful face. She did not appear to notice me, and there was moreover a strangely fixed look about her eyes, I might almost say they appeared as if they had no power of vision; I thought she was sleeping with her eyes open. I felt quite uncomfortable, and so I slipped away quietly into the Professor's lecture-room, which was close at hand. Afterwards I learnt that the figure which I had seen was Spalanzani's daughter, Olimpia, whom he keeps locked in a most wicked and unaccountable way, and no man is ever allowed to come near her. Perhaps, however, there is after all something peculiar about her; perhaps she's an idiot or something of that sort. But why am I telling you all this? I could have told

you it all better and more in detail when I see you. For in a fortnight I shall be amongst you. I must send my dear sweet angel, my Clara, again. Then the little bit of ill-temper, which, I must confess, took possession of me after her fearfully sensible letter, will be blown away. And that is the reason why I am not writing to her as well to-day. With all best wishes, &c.

Nothing more strange and extraordinary can be imagined, gracious reader, than what happened to my poor friend, the young student Nathanael, and which I have undertaken to relate to you. Have you ever lived to experience anything that completely took possession of your heart and mind and thoughts to the utter exclusion of everything else? All was seething and boiling within you; your blood, heated to a fever pitch, leapt through your veins and inflamed your cheeks. Your gaze was so peculiar, as if seeking to grasp in empty space forms not seen of any other eye, and all your words ended in sighs betokening some mystery. Then your friends asked you, “What is the matter with you, my dear friend? What do you see?” And, wishing to describe the inner pictures in all their vivid colours, with their lights and their shades, you in vain struggled to find words with which to express yourself. But you felt as if you must gather up all the events that had happened, wonderful, splendid, terrible, jocose, and awful, in the very first word, so that the whole might be revealed by a single electric discharge, so to speak. Yet every word and all that partook of the nature of communication by intelligible sounds seemed to be colourless, cold, and dead. Then you try and try again, and stutter and stammer, whilst your friends’ prosy questions strike like icy winds upon your heart’s hot fire until they extinguish it. But if, like a bold painter, you had first sketched in a few audacious strokes the outline of the picture you had in your soul, you would then easily have been able to deepen and intensify the colours one after the other, until the varied throng of living figures carried your friends away, and they, like you, saw themselves in the midst of the scene that had proceeded out of your own soul.

Strictly speaking, indulgent reader, I must indeed confess to you, nobody has asked me for the history of young Nathanael; but you are very well aware that I belong to that remarkable class of authors who, when they are bearing anything about in their minds in the manner I have just described, feel as if everybody who comes near them, and also the whole world to boot, were asking, “Oh! what is it? Oh! do tell us, my good sir?” Hence I was most powerfully impelled to narrate to you Nathanael’s ominous life. My soul was full of the elements of wonder and extraordinary peculiarity in it; but, for this very reason, and because it was necessary in the very beginning to dispose you, indulgent reader, to bear with what is fantastic—and that is not a little thing I racked my brain to find a way of commencing the story in a significant and original manner, calculated to arrest your attention. To begin with “Once upon a time,” the best beginning for a story, seemed to me too tame; with “In the small country town S___ lived,” rather better, at any rate allowing plenty of room to work up to the climax; or to plunge at once *in medias res*⁸, ““Go to the devil!’ cried the student Nathanael, his eyes blazing wildly with rage and fear, when the weather-glass hawker Giuseppe Coppola”—well, that is what I really had written, when I thought I detected something of the ridiculous in Nathanael’s wild glance; and the history is anything but laughable. I could not find any words which seemed fitted to reflect in even the feeblest degree the brightness of the colours of my mental vision. I determined not to begin at all. So I pray you, gracious reader, accept the three letters which my friend Lothair has been so kind as to communicate to me as the outline of the picture, into which I will endeavour to introduce more and more colour as I proceed with my narrative. Perhaps, like a good portrait-painter, I may succeed in depicting more than one figure in such wise that you will recognise it as a good likeness without being acquainted with the original, and feel as if you had very often seen the original with your own bodily eyes. Perhaps, too, you will then believe that nothing is more wonderful, nothing more fantastic than real life, and that all that a writer can do is to present it as a dark reflection from a dim cut mirror.

In order to make the very commencement more intelligible, it is necessary to add to the letters that, soon after the death of Nathanael's father, Clara and Lothair, the children of a distant relative, who had likewise died, leaving them orphans, were taken by Nathanael's mother into her own house. Clara and Nathanael conceived a warm affection for each other, against which not the slightest objection in the world could be urged. When therefore Nathanael left home to prosecute his studies in G____, they were betrothed. It is from G____ that his last letter is written, where he is attending the lectures of Spalanzani, the distinguished Professor of Physics.

I might now proceed comfortably with my narration, did not at this moment Clara's image rise up so vividly before my eyes that I cannot turn them away from it, just as I never could when she looked upon me and smiled so sweetly. Nowhere would she have passed for beautiful; that was the unanimous opinion of all who professed to have any technical knowledge of beauty. But whilst architects praised the pure proportions of her figure and form, painters averred that her neck, shoulders, and bosom were almost too chastely modelled, and yet, on the other hand, one and all were in love with her glorious Magdalene hair⁹, and talked a good deal of nonsense about Battoni-like¹⁰ colouring. One of them, a veritable romanticist, strangely enough likened her eyes to a lake by Ruisdael¹¹, in which is reflected the pure azure of the cloudless sky, the beauty of woods and flowers, and all the bright and varied life of a living landscape. Poets and musicians went still further and said, "What's all this talk about seas and reflections? How can we look upon the girl without feeling that wonderful heavenly songs and melodies beam upon us from her eyes, penetrating deep down into our hearts, till all becomes awake and throbbing with emotion? And if we cannot sing anything at all passable then, why, we are not worth much; and this we can also plainly read in the rare smile which flits around her lips when we have the hardihood to squeak out something in her presence which we pretend to call singing, in spite of the fact that it is nothing more than a few single notes confusedly linked together." And it really was so. Clara had the powerful fancy of a bright, innocent, unaffected child, a woman's deep and sympathetic heart, and an understanding clear, sharp, and discriminating. Dreamers and visionaries had but a bad time of it with her; for without saying very much—she was not by nature of a talkative disposition—she plainly asked, by her calm steady look, and rare ironical smile, "How can you imagine, my dear friends, that I can take these fleeting shadowy images for true living and breathing forms?" For this reason many found fault with her as being cold, prosaic, and devoid of feeling; others, however, who had reached a clearer and deeper conception of life, were extremely fond of the intelligent, childlike, large-hearted girl. But none had such an affection for her as Nathanael, who was a zealous and cheerful cultivator of the fields of science and art. Clara clung to her lover with all her heart; the first clouds she encountered in life were when he had to separate from her. With what delight did she fly into his arms when, as he had promised in his last letter to Lothair, he really came back to his native town and entered his mother's room! And as Nathanael had foreseen, the moment he saw Clara again he no longer thought about either the advocate Coppelius or her sensible letter; his ill-humour had quite disappeared.

Nevertheless Nathanael was right when he told his friend Lothair that the repulsive vendor of weather-glasses, Coppola, had exercised a fatal and disturbing influence upon his life. It was quite patent to all; for even during the first few days he showed that he was completely and entirely changed. He gave himself up to gloomy reveries, and moreover acted so strangely; they had never observed anything at all like it in him before. Everything, even his own life, was to him but dreams and presentiments. His constant theme was that every man who delusively imagined himself to be free was merely the plaything of the cruel sport of mysterious powers, and it was vain for man to resist them; he must humbly submit to whatever destiny had decreed for him. He went so far as to maintain that it was foolish to believe that a man could do anything in art or science of his own accord; for the inspiration in which alone any true artistic work could be done did not proceed from the spirit within

outwards, but was the result of the operation directed inwards of some Higher Principle existing without and beyond ourselves.

This mystic extravagance was in the highest degree repugnant to Clara's clear intelligent mind, but it seemed vain to enter upon any attempt at refutation. Yet when Nathanael went on to prove that Coppelius was the Evil Principle which had entered into him and taken possession of him at the time he was listening behind the curtain, and that this hateful demon would in some terrible way ruin their happiness, then Clara grew grave and said, "Yes, Nathanael. You are right; Coppelius is an Evil Principle; he can do dreadful things, as bad as could a Satanic power which should assume a living physical form, but only—only if you do not banish him from your mind and thoughts. So long as you believe in him he exists and is at work; your belief in him is his only power." Whereupon Nathanael, quite angry because Clara would only grant the existence of the demon in his own mind, began to dilate at large upon the whole mystic doctrine of devils and awful powers, but Clara abruptly broke off the theme by making, to Nathanael's very great disgust, some quite commonplace remark. Such deep mysteries are sealed books to cold, unsusceptible characters, he thought, without being clearly conscious to himself that he counted Clara amongst these inferior natures, and accordingly he did not remit his efforts to initiate her into these mysteries. In the morning, when she was helping to prepare breakfast, he would take his stand beside her, and read all sorts of mystic books to her, until she begged him—"But, my dear Nathanael, I shall have to scold you as the Evil Principle which exercises a fatal influence upon my coffee. For if I do as you wish, and let things go their own way, and look into your eyes whilst you read, the coffee will all boil over into the fire, and you will not get any breakfast." Then Nathanael hastily banged the book to and ran away in great displeasure to his own room.

Formerly he had possessed a peculiar talent for writing pleasing, sparkling tales, which Clara took the greatest delight in listening to; but now his productions were gloomy, unintelligible, and wanting in form, so that, although Clara out of forbearance towards him did not say so, he nevertheless felt how very little interest she took in them. There was nothing that Clara disliked so much as what was tedious; at such times her intellectual sleepiness was not to be overcome; it was betrayed both in her glances and in her words. Nathanael's effusions were, in truth, exceedingly tedious. His ill-humour and Clara's cold prosaic temperament continued to increase; Clara could not conceal her distaste of his dark, gloomy, wearying mysticism; and thus both began to be more and more estranged from each other without exactly being aware of it themselves. The image of the ugly Coppelius had, as Nathanael was obliged to confess to himself, faded considerably in his fancy, and it often cost him great pains to present him in vivid colours in his literary efforts, in which he played the part of the ghoul of Destiny. At length it entered into his head to make his dismal presentiment that Coppelius would ruin his happiness the subject of a poem. He made himself and Clara, united by true love, the central figures, but represented a black hand as being from time to time thrust into their life and plucking out a joy that had blossomed for them. At length, as they were standing at the altar, the terrible Coppelius appeared and touched Clara's lovely eyes, which leapt into Nathanael's own bosom, burning and hissing like bloody sparks. Then Coppelius laid hold upon him, and hurled him into a blazing circle of fire, which spun round with the speed of a whirlwind, and, storming and blustering, dashed away with him. The fearful noise it made was like a furious hurricane lashing the foaming sea-waves until they rise up like black, white-headed giants in the midst of the raging struggle. But through the midst of this savage fury of the tempest he heard Clara's voice calling, "Can you not see me, dear? Coppelius has deceived you; they were not my eyes which burned so in your bosom; they were fiery drops of your own heart's blood. Look at me, I have got my own eyes still." Nathanael thought, "Yes, that is Clara, and I am hers for ever." Then this thought laid a powerful grasp upon the fiery circle so that it stood still, and the riotous turmoil died away rumbling down a dark abyss. Nathanael looked into Clara's

eyes; but it was death whose gaze rested so kindly upon him.

Whilst Nathanael was writing this work he was very quiet and sober-minded; he filed and polished every line, and as he had chosen to submit himself to the limitations of metre, he did not rest until all was pure and musical. When, however, he had at length finished it and read it aloud to himself he was seized with horror and awful dread, and he screamed, "Whose hideous voice is this?" But he soon came to see in it again nothing beyond a very successful poem, and he confidently believed it would enkindle Clara's cold temperament, though to what end she should be thus aroused was not quite clear to his own mind, nor yet what would be the real purpose served by tormenting her with these dreadful pictures, which prophesied a terrible and ruinous end to her affection.

Nathanael and Clara sat in his mother's little garden. Clara was bright and cheerful, since for three entire days her lover, who had been busy writing his poem, had not teased her with his dreams or forebodings. Nathanael, too, spoke in a gay and vivacious way of things of merry import, as he formerly used to do, so that Clara said, "Ah! now I have you again. We have driven away that ugly Coppelius, you see." Then it suddenly occurred to him that he had got the poem in his pocket which he wished to read to her. He at once took out the manuscript and began to read. Clara, anticipating something tedious as usual, prepared to submit to the infliction, and calmly resumed her knitting. But as the sombre clouds rose up darker and darker she let her knitting fall on her lap and sat with her eyes fixed in a set stare upon Nathanael's face.

He was quite carried away by his own work, the fire of enthusiasm coloured his cheeks a deep red and tears started from his eyes. At length he concluded, groaning and showing great lassitude; grasping Clara's hand, he sighed as if he were being utterly melted in inconsolable grief, "Oh! Clara! Clara!" She drew him softly to her heart and said in a low but very grave and impressive tone, "Nathanael, my darling Nathanael, throw that foolish, senseless, stupid thing into the fire." Then Nathanael leapt indignantly to his feet, crying, as he pushed Clara from him, "You damned lifeless automaton!" and rushed away. Clara was cut to the heart, and wept bitterly. "Oh! he has never loved me, for he does not understand me," she sobbed.

Lothair entered the arbour. Clara was obliged to tell him all that had taken place. He was passionately fond of his sister; and every word of her complaint fell like a spark upon his heart, so that the displeasure which he had long entertained against his dreamy friend Nathanael was kindled into furious anger. He hastened to find Nathanael, and upbraided him in harsh words for his irrational behaviour towards his beloved sister. The fiery Nathanael answered him in the same style. "A fantastic, crack-brained fool," was retaliated with, "A miserable, common, everyday sort of fellow." The meeting was the inevitable consequence. They agreed to meet on the following morning behind the garden-wall, and fight, according to the custom of the students of the place, with sharp rapiers. They went about silent and gloomy; Clara had both heard and seen the violent quarrel, and also observed the fencing master bring the rapiers in the dusk of the evening. She had a presentiment of what was to happen. They both appeared at the appointed place wrapped up in the same gloomy silence, and threw off their coats. Their eyes flaming with the bloodthirsty light of pugnacity, they were about to begin their contest when Clara burst through the garden door. Sobbing, she screamed, "You savage, terrible men! Cut me down before you attack each other; for how can I live when my lover has slain my brother, or my brother slain my lover?" Lothair let his weapon fall and gazed silently upon the ground whilst Nathanael's heart was rent with sorrow, and all the affection which he had felt for his lovely Clara in the happiest days of her golden youth was awakened within him. His murderous weapon, too, fell from his hand; he threw himself at Clara's feet. "Oh! can you ever forgive me, my only, my dear loved Clara? Can you, my dear brother Lothair, also forgive me?" Lothair was touched by his friend's great distress; the three young people embraced each other amidst endless tears, and swore never again to break their bond of love and fidelity.

Nathanael felt as if a heavy burden that had been weighing him down to the earth was now rolled from off him, nay, as if by offering resistance to the dark power which had possessed him, he had rescued his own self from the ruin which had threatened him. Three happy days he now spent amidst the loved ones, and then returned to G____, where he had still a year to stay before settling down in his native town for life.

Everything having reference to Coppelius had been concealed from the mother, for they knew she could not think of him without horror, since she as well as Nathanael believed him to be guilty of causing her husband's death.

When Nathanael came to the house where he lived he was greatly astonished to find it burnt down to the ground, so that nothing but the bare outer walls were left standing amidst a heap of ruins. Although the fire had broken out in the laboratory of the chemist who lived on the ground-floor, and had therefore spread upwards, some of Nathanael's bold, active friends had succeeded in time in forcing way into his room in the upper storey and saving his books and manuscripts and instruments. They had carried them all uninjured into another house, where they engaged a room for him; this he now at once took possession of. That he lived opposite Professor Spalanzani did not strike him particularly, nor did it occur to him as anything more singular than he could, as he observed, by looking out of his window see straight into the room where Olimpia often sat alone. Her figure he could plainly distinguish, although her features were uncertain and confused. It did at length occur to him, however, that she remained for hours together in the same position in which he had first discovered her through the glass door, sitting at a little table without any occupation whatever, and it was evident that she was constantly gazing across in his direction. He could not but confess to himself that he had never seen a finer figure. However, with Clara mistress of his heart, he remained perfectly unaffected by Olimpia's stiffness and apathy; and it was only occasionally that he sent a fugitive glance over his compendium across to her—that was all.

He was writing to Clara; a light tap came at the door. At his summons to "Come in," Coppola's repulsive face appeared peeping in. Nathanael felt his heart beat with trepidation; but, recollecting what Spalanzani had told him about his fellow-countryman Coppola, and what he had himself so faithfully promised his beloved in respect to the Sand-man Coppelius, he was ashamed at himself for this childish fear of spectres. Accordingly, he controlled himself with an effort, and said, as quietly and as calmly as he possibly could, "I don't want to buy any weather-glasses, my good friend; you had better go elsewhere." Then Coppola came right into the room, and said in a hoarse voice, screwing up his wide mouth into a hideous smile, whilst his little eyes flashed keenly from beneath his long grey eyelashes, "What! Nee weather-gless? Nee weather-gless? 've got foine oyes as well—foine oyes!" Affrighted, Nathanael cried, "You stupid man, how can you have eyes?—eyes—eyes?" But Coppola, laying aside his weather-glasses, thrust his hands into his big coat-pockets and brought out several spy-glasses and spectacles, and put them on the table. "Theer! Theer! Spect'cles! Spect'cles to put 'n nose! Them's my oyes—foine oyes." And he continued to produce more and more spectacles from his pockets until the table began to gleam and flash all over. Thousands of eyes were looking and blinking convulsively, and staring up at Nathanael; he could not avert his gaze from the table. Coppola went on heaping up his spectacles, whilst wilder and ever wilder burning flashes crossed through and through each other and darted their blood-red rays into Nathanael's breast. Quite overcome, and frantic with terror, he shouted, "Stop! stop! you terrible man!" and he seized Coppola by the arm, which he had again thrust into his pocket in order to bring out still more spectacles, although the whole table was covered all over with them. With a harsh disagreeable laugh Coppola gently freed himself; and with

the words "So! went none! Well, here foine gless!" he swept all his spectacles together, and put them back into his coat-pockets, whilst from a breast-pocket he produced a great number of larger and smaller perspectives.¹² As soon as the spectacles were gone Nathanael recovered his equanimity again; and, bending his thoughts upon Clara, he clearly discerned that the gruesome incubus had proceeded only from himself, as also that Coppola was a right honest mechanic and optician, and far from being Coppelius's dreaded double and ghost. And then, besides, none of the glasses which Coppola now placed on the table had anything at all singular about them, at least nothing so weird as the spectacles; so, in order to square accounts with himself, Nathanael now really determined to buy something of the man. He took up a small, very beautifully cut pocket perspective, and by way of proving it looked through the window. Never before in his life had he had a glass in his hands that brought out things so clearly and sharply and distinctly. Involuntarily he directed the glass upon Spalanzani's room; Olimpia sat at the little table as usual, her arms laid upon it and her hands folded. Now he saw for the first time the regular and exquisite beauty of her features. The eyes, however, seemed to him to have a singular look of fixity and lifelessness. But as he continued to look closer and more carefully through the glass he fancied a light like humid moonbeams came into them. It seemed as if their power of vision was now being enkindled; their glances shone with ever-increasing vivacity. Nathanael remained standing at the window as if glued to the spot by a wizard's spell, his gaze rivetted unchangeably upon the divinely beautiful Olimpia. A coughing and shuffling of the feet awakened him out of his enchaining dream, as it were. Coppola stood behind him, "Tre zechini" (three ducats). Nathanael had completely forgotten the optician; he hastily paid the sum demanded. "Ain't 't? Foine gless? foine gless?" asked Coppola in his harsh unpleasant voice, smiling sardonically. "Ye yes, yes," rejoined Nathanael impatiently; "adieu, my good friend." But Coppola did not leave the room without casting many peculiar side-glances upon Nathanael; and the young student heard him laughing loudly on the stairs. "Ah well!" thought he, "he's laughing at me because I've paid him too much for this little perspective—because I've given him too much money—that's it." As he softly murmured these words he fancied he detected a gasping sigh as of a dying man stealing awfully through the room; his heart stopped beating with fear. But to be sure he had heaved a deep sigh himself; it was quite plain. "Clara is quite right," said he to himself, "in holding me to be an incurable ghost-seer; and yet it's very ridiculous—ay, more than ridiculous, that the stupid thought of having paid Coppola too much for his glass should cause me this strange anxiety; I can't see any reason for it."

Now he sat down to finish his letter to Clara; but a glance through the window showed him Olimpia still in her former posture. Urged by an irresistible impulse he jumped up and seized Coppola's perspective; nor could he tear himself away from the fascinating Olimpia until his friend and brother Siegmund called for him to go to Professor Spalanzani's lecture. The curtains before the door of the all-important room were closely drawn, so that he could not see Olimpia. Nor could he even see her from his own room during the two following days, notwithstanding that he scarcely ever left his window, and maintained a scarce interrupted watch through Coppola's perspective upon her room. On the third day curtains even were drawn across the window. Plunged into the depths of despair,—goaded by longing and ardent desire, he hurried outside the walls of the town. Olimpia's image hovered about his path in the air and stepped forth out of the bushes, and peeped up at him with large and lustrous eyes from the bright surface of the brook. Clara's image was completely faded from his mind; he had no thoughts except for Olimpia. He uttered his love-plaints aloud and in a lachrymose tone, "Oh! my glorious, noble star of love, have you only risen to vanish again, and leave me in the darkness and hopelessness of night?"

Returning home, he became aware that there was a good deal of noisy bustle going on in Spalanzani's house. All the doors stood wide open; men were taking in all kinds of gear and furniture

- [read online Hubris: The Inside Story of Spin, Scandal, and the Selling of the Iraq War](#)
- [read online Sociology of the Qur'an Part II](#)
- [click **Pulp Fiction: The Complete Story of Quentin Tarantino's Masterpiece pdf**](#)
- [click **A Beautiful Question: Finding Nature's Deep Design pdf, azw \(kindle\)**](#)
- [download online **People Skills: How to Assert Yourself, Listen to Others, and Resolve Conflicts**](#)

- <http://test1.batsinbelfries.com/ebooks/The-John-Connolly-Collection--2---The-White-Road--The-Black-Angel--and-The-Unquiet.pdf>
- <http://qolorea.com/library/Sociology-of-the-Qur-an-Part-II.pdf>
- <http://deltaphenomics.nl/?library/Pulp-Fiction--The-Complete-Story-of-Quentin-Tarantino-s-Masterpiece.pdf>
- <http://sidenoter.com/?ebooks/Stigmata.pdf>
- <http://hasanetmekci.com/ebooks/Batman--The-Novelization.pdf>